



HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN **IN ACTION**

APRIL 7-8, 2011 NASHUA, NH

ALL INNOVATION 21ST CENTURY
STUDENTS SKILLSTEACHERS
LEADERSHIP GRADUATION
COLLEGE CAREER LEARNING
COLLABORATION **PREPARED**
KNOWLEDGE WORKER SEQUITY
CREATIVITY GLOBAL CITIZENS
COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION
HIGHER ASPIRATIONS **FOR**
NEW ENGLAND **SUCCESS**

WELCOME

Dear Participant:

Welcome to High School Redesign in Action, the New England Secondary School Consortium's second regional conference for high school educators. We invited you here today to share success stories, exchange innovative solutions, connect with colleagues, and build momentum for secondary transformation in your schools, communities, and states. Over the two days of the conference you will be able to choose from among seventeen presentations featuring a range of high-impact strategies that have successfully raised student aspirations, achievement, and outcomes in secondary schools across New England.

The fifteen presenting school teams from Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont were selected not only for their exemplary work, but also for their extraordinary commitment to a goal we all believe in—making sure all students are given a chance to succeed, to live a fulfilled and meaningful life, and to make a positive contribution to their communities.

As we go about our daily work, we should remind ourselves that improving our schools is not just about raising test scores or graduation rates; it's also about a stronger and more vibrant economy, a more skilled and productive workforce, a healthier and more engaged citizenry, and a brighter and more prosperous future for our children. That's the end goal. That's the reason why we are all here today.

As a regional partnership, the Consortium is bringing people together to achieve the common goals we each work toward every day. Our hope is that you will not only leave this conference with new ideas and strategies to take home to your school, but that you will leave with a stronger sense of shared purpose, a heightened awareness that you are not alone in this challenging work, and the knowledge that you—as educators committed to learning, collaborating, and growing as professionals—play a critical role in shaping the future of both our country and our world.

Sincerely,
New England Secondary School Consortium

AGENDA

Thursday, April 7

- 1:00 pm **Welcome – Nashua Ballroom**
- 1:30 pm **Plenary Session – Nashua Ballroom**
Planning, facilitating, and implementing a *Global Best Practices* review in your school
- 3:30 pm **Break – Ashwood Court**
- 3:45 pm **Concurrent Sessions – Round 1**
Spotlight on high schools + NESSC policy workshop
- 5:00 pm **Socializing + Hors D'Oeuvres – Ashwood Court**
Presentation: *Creating the Future of Secondary Education in New England: Innovating Across the Region*
- 5:30 pm **Speed Networking – Nashua Ballroom**
Exchanging ideas, strategies, and contact information with your New England colleagues
- 7:00 pm **Closure – Nashua Ballroom**
NOTE: Dinner is not being served

Friday, April 8

- 7:30 am **Continental Breakfast – Nashua Ballroom**
- 8:30 am **NESSC Presentation + Special Announcement**
- 9:15 am **Concurrent Sessions – Round 2**
Spotlight on high schools
- 10:30 am **Break – Ashwood Court**
- 10:45 am **Concurrent Sessions – Round 3**
Spotlight on high schools + NESSC messaging presentation
- 12:00 pm **Lunch – Nashua Ballroom**
- 12:45 pm **Concurrent Sessions – Round 4**
Spotlight on high schools
- 2:30 pm **Closure – Nashua Ballroom**

Concurrent Sessions Schedule



1 Thursday, April 7

3:45 pm — 5:00 pm

ROOM	SESSION
Amherst	Opening Doors: Using Competencies to Create New Learning Opportunities [Timberlane Regional High School]
Balsam	An Expedition in Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships [Casco Bay High School for Expeditionary Learning]
Bedford	Great Expectations: The Senior Capstone Experience [Edwin O. Smith High School]
Chesterfield	Make Sure it Survives: Designing High-Impact, Forward-Thinking Policies [New England Secondary School Consortium]
Northwood	Extended Learning for Every Student [Mt. Hope High School]
Wentworth Ballroom	Tearing Down Walls, Building a Brighter Future [Vergennes Union High School]

2 Friday, April 8

9:15 am — 10:30 am

ROOM	SESSION
Amherst	When Two Schools Collide: Integrating Traditional Academics and CTE [Mt. Blue High School and Foster Technology Center]
Balsam	An Expedition in Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships [Casco Bay High School for Expeditionary Learning]
Bedford	Tearing Down Walls, Building a Brighter Future [Vergennes Union High School]
Bristol	Transformational Leadership: Our Journey Toward Excellence [Smithfield High School]
Chesterfield	Make a Connection! [East Hartford High School]
Granite Bistro	Breaking Down the Barriers of Time and Place: Authentic Virtual Learning [Virtual Learning Academy Charter School]
Hanover	Many Voices, One Mission: Democratizing School Transformation [Harwood Union High School]
Northwood	Extended Learning for Every Student [Mt. Hope High School]
Wentworth Ballroom	Opening Doors: Using Competencies to Create New Learning Opportunities [Timberlane Regional High School]

3 Friday, April 8

10:45 am — 12:00 pm

ROOM	SESSION
Amherst	When Two Schools Collide: Integrating Traditional Academics and CTE [Mt. Blue High School and Foster Technology Center]
Balsam	Planning for Success: Technology-Driven Personal Learning Plans [Simsbury High School]
Bedford	Next Generation Learning...Now! [Gray-New Gloucester High School]
Bristol	Our Global Best Practices: How We Personalized High Standards [Shea High School]
Chesterfield	Make a Connection! [East Hartford High School]
Hanover	Selling the Mission: Practical Communication Strategies for Schools [New England Secondary School Consortium]
Northwood	Embracing the Big Picture: Real-World Learning for Every Student [Rochester High School and South Burlington High School]
Wentworth Ballroom	Caring and Common Sense: Personalizing Culture to Enhance Student Learning [Goffstown High School]

4 Friday, April 8

12:45 pm — 2:30 pm

ROOM	SESSION
Balsam	Breaking Down the Barriers of Time and Place: Authentic Virtual Learning [Virtual Learning Academy Charter School]
Bedford	Next Generation Learning...Now! [Gray-New Gloucester High School]
Bristol	Transformational Leadership: Our Journey Toward Excellence [Smithfield High School]
Chesterfield	Great Expectations: The Senior Capstone Experience [Edwin O. Smith High School]
Northwood	Embracing the Big Picture: Real-World Learning for Every Student [Rochester High School and South Burlington High School]
Wentworth Ballroom	Caring and Common Sense: Personalizing Culture to Enhance Student Learning [Goffstown High School]

CONNECTICUT PRESENTATIONS

2 3 Make a Connection!

Connections—East Hartford High School’s comprehensive advisory program—engages students in activities and small-group discussions that strengthen interpersonal skills, encourage self-evaluation and goal setting, foster meaningful relationships between students and staff, promote academic achievement and social well-being, and develop positive connections between students and their community. Workshop participants will experience selected advisory activities and leave with a strong understanding of Connections and the strategies they need to build a successful advisory program in their school.

SCHOOL: East Hartford High School, East Hartford, Connecticut

PRESENTERS: Cathy Barry (school counselor), Sarah Barry (teacher), Daniel Pichette (teacher), Michelle Marion (assistant principal), Christopher Sparks (teacher)

CONTACT: Michelle Marion | marion.mt@easthartford.org
www.easthartford.org

1 4 Great Expectations: The Senior Capstone Experience

The senior project at Edwin O. Smith High School has been a cornerstone of our school culture for more than two decades. In addition to teaching traditional academic knowledge, the capstone experience engages students in personal inquiry, public presentations, and community service. Participants will leave with a deep understanding of the senior-project experience, its principal components, and the organizational structure that makes it work. We will also discuss the program’s evolution, including the skills that students are required to master, the cooperation that makes it happen, the enthusiasm it excites in the students, the contributions (and frustrations) of the faculty, and the community support that ultimately makes our senior projects a success.

SCHOOL: Edwin O. Smith High School, Storrs, Connecticut

PRESENTERS: Marilyn Archibald (senior project coordinator), Lou DeLoreto (principal), Deborah Veronneau (senior project coordinator)

CONTACT: Lou DeLoreto | ldeloreto@eosmith.org
www.eosmith.org

3 Planning for Success: Technology-Driven Personal Learning Plans

Helping students make the best choices and see their education in terms of a lifelong plan can be challenge for school counselors and educators. To make the job a little easier, Simsbury High School developed an online platform that helps students and parents visualize the entire arc of the developmental guidance program, while storing the critical artifacts—surveys, interest inventories, the student’s resume—that make up an effective personal learning plan. Presenters will give a demonstration of the online system, describe a postsecondary-planning process that can engage both students and parents, and share the development of “Student Learning Clusters,” which help our students select the right courses, extracurricular activities, and community connections. Participants will leave with a working model of a personal learning plan and the insights they need to develop a customized program for their school.

SCHOOL: Simsbury High School, Simsbury, Connecticut

PRESENTERS: Tor Fiske (director of guidance), Neil Sullivan (principal)

CONTACT: Neil Sullivan | nsullivan@simsbury.k12.ct.us
www.simsbury.k12.ct.us

MAINE PRESENTATIONS

1 2 An Expedition in Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships

How can school culture, program design, and common instructional practices be used to make rigor, relevance, and meaningful relationships a daily reality for every student? Faculty from Casco Bay High School will share the successes, struggles, and lessons we experienced since our school was founded six years ago. Participants will learn the key components of “learning expeditions”—the foundation of our curriculum. Expeditions are long-term, in-depth interdisciplinary studies that build fundamental academic proficiency, address authentic learning needs, equip students for success in adult life, and culminate in a project, product, or performance that can redefine what students believe they are capable of achieving. Session participants will also leave with several practical strategies for enhancing rigor, relevance, and relationships in their school.

SCHOOL: Casco Bay High School for Expeditionary Learning, Portland, Maine

PRESENTERS: Leslie Appelbaum (teacher, founding teaching strategist), Derek Pierce (principal), Scott Shibles (wellness teacher, dean of student life)

CONTACT: Derek Pierce | piercd@portlandschools.org
cbhs.portlandschools.org

2 3 When Two Schools Collide: Integrating Traditional Academics and CTE

In 2008, a building-improvement plan was approved for Mt. Blue High School and Foster Technology Center, which provides career and technical education to five surrounding high schools. The two schools are currently working together to create a new blended campus that will integrate the instructional practices, organizational designs, and leadership structure of two formerly distinct programs. A Futures Team was formed that brought together stakeholders, analyzed best practices from across the country, and proposed a bold new vision for the schools: program integration, greater collaboration, and flexible learning pathways for all students. The \$64 million question that still remains is “How do we make this work?” Participants will learn about our trials and tribulations as we work to balance high school and CTE requirements, manage budget constraints, and blend distinct faculties into a coherent campus that serves every student well.

SCHOOL: Mt. Blue High School and Foster Technology Center, Farmington, Maine

PRESENTERS: Sam Dunbar (MBHS teacher), Charlie Fontaine (FTC teacher), Glenn Kapiloff (FTC director), Monique Poulin (MBHS principal)

CONTACT: Monique Poulin | mpoulin@mbrsd.org or Glenn Kapiloff | gkapiloff@mbrsd.org
www.mbrsd.org | www.foster.maine.cte.org

3 4 Next Generation Learning...Now!

In 2010, Gray–New Gloucester High School was selected to be a pilot site for the Partnership for Next Generation Learning, a national initiative created by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Stupski Foundation. As an NxGL Innovation Lab, our school is working to make innovative student-centered learning a daily reality for every student. After developing a bold new district vision, we began the transformation from a reference-based to a standards-based education system, which required robust literacy strategies in all content areas, new course syllabi and assessments, and a comprehensive management system that allows us to track the attainment of standards across courses, subjects, grade levels, and learning pathways. While our school is still in the early stages of its work, we are already seeing strong indicators of success. Participants will learn about our change process from conception to implementation, and leave with a variety of concrete, nuts-and-bolts strategies for maintaining high standards in a student-centered learning environment.

SCHOOL: Gray New Gloucester High School, Gray, Maine

PRESENTERS: Ben Braasch (teacher), David Coleman (teacher), Erin Maguire (teacher), Linda Morehouse (teacher), Paul Penna (principal)

CONTACT: Paul Penna | papenna@msad15.org
www.msad15.org/Schools/hsweb/index.html

NEW HAMPSHIRE PRESENTATIONS

1 2 Opening Doors: Using Competencies to Create New Learning Opportunities

The past five years have been a time of profound transformation at Timberlane Regional High School. In 2007, the Department of Education mandated that high schools award academic credit based on the achievement of course competencies, not seat time. To meet these new expectations, our teachers redesigned the curriculum, adopted new instructional techniques, and integrated authentic performance assessments into virtually all courses. Participants will learn how our school's move to a competency-based system empowered us to offer more flexible graduation pathways for students. These changes have also allowed us to expand our Evening Division Program, which students of all abilities attend. For example, accelerated students might attend the program to satisfy required courses and free up time for electives during the day, while other students can make up courses or work toward the GED option. Regardless of which pathway a student selects, graduation from Timberlane requires the same comprehensive demonstration of knowledge.

SCHOOL: Timberlane Regional High School

PRESENTERS: Robert Dawson (assistant principal), Peter Fisher (teacher), Scott Strainge (director of secondary education), Don Woodworth (principals), Timberlane students from the Evening Division Program

CONTACT: Donald Woodworth | donald.woodworth@timberlane.net

www.timberlanehs.com

2 4 Breaking Down the Barriers of Time and Place: Authentic Virtual Learning

The Virtual Learning Academy Charter School—a virtual high school based in New Hampshire—offers more than eighty courses, including dual-credit and college-credit courses, to students across New Hampshire and New England. Our school's anytime-anywhere learning environment provides flexible, authentic, personalized instruction that includes consistent one-to-one interactions our school's 110 teachers who work from eight different states. Approximately two-thirds our 8,600 course enrollments come from traditional public schools, and VLACS recently implemented competency-based course requirements, which are state mandated in New Hampshire. Participants will leave this session with an understanding of how our virtual-learning model works and how they can partner with VLACS to support their students, multiply their learning pathways, and promote student-centered school transformation.

SCHOOL: Virtual Learning Academy Charter School, Exeter, New Hampshire

PRESENTERS: Kyle Cote (director of student services and guidance) Steve Kossakoski (chief executive officer), Ollire Lane-Wortley (director of academic support and professional development)

CONTACT: Steve Kossakoski | skossakoski@vlacs.org
www.vlacs.org

3 4 Caring and Common Sense: Personalizing Culture to Enhance Student Learning

Over the past decade, Goffstown High School learned that the value of healthy relationships simply cannot be underestimated. From our mission statement to the daily interactions that take place in our hallways and classrooms, our values—care, reflection, encouragement, and an unwavering focus on learning—shape our community dialogue at every level. In this session, participants will examine the leadership principles, institutional practices, and faculty and student dispositions that promote a positive culture and improve achievement. We will share examples of strategies that helped us establish a clear organizational identity, keep people focused on the bigger picture, and communicate effectively and openly, while always acknowledging and honoring the individual. Participants will leave with leadership and instructional models that can dramatically transform the culture—and performance—of their learning community.

SCHOOL: Goffstown High School, Goffstown, New Hampshire

PRESENTERS: Martha Benton (guidance coordinator), Kevin Farley (curriculum coordinator), Frank McBride (principal), Kim McCann (assistant principal)

CONTACT: Frank McBride | fmcbride@goffstown.k12.nh.us
www.goffstown.k12.nh.us/ghs

RHODE ISLAND PRESENTATIONS

1 2 Extended Learning for Every Student

In 2006, Mt. Hope's School Improvement Team was charged with building a comprehensive support system for all students that would not only improve academic achievement, but also increase our graduation and college-going rates. Presenters will share the data-driven action-research and decision-making model that the team used to develop personalized interventions and support strategies for students. Mt. Hope's Extended Day, Youth Experiencing Success, PLUS, and BOOST programs will be described, and participants will leave with practical, effective strategies for increasing student retention, performance, and aspirations.

SCHOOL: Mt. Hope High School, Bristol, Rhode Island

PRESENTERS: Jaime Crowley (assistant principal), Tim Gardiner (BOOST assistant coordinator), Guy Murgo (assistant principal), Libby Pagano (BOOST assistant coordinator), Colleen Powers (YES coordinator), Don Rebello (principal)

CONTACT: Don Rebello | rebellod@bw.k12.ri.us

www2.bw.k12.ri.us

3 Our Global Best Practices: How We Personalized High Standards

In this interactive workshop, participants will create an individual learning plan, perform a course audit, and select a learning pathway—from a student's point of view! Personalization is the main theme of this presentation, and participants will learn how Shea High School uses strategies such as digital ILPs, standards-based report cards, and school-wide rubrics to connect universally high academic expectations to student interests and learning needs, and to improve instructional quality across courses, content areas, and grade levels. Participants will also learn how our school used Global Best Practices, the Consortium's self-assessment tool, to develop a comprehensive school-improvement plan.

SCHOOL: Shea High School, Pawtucket, Rhode Island

PRESENTERS: Monique Jacob (director of teaching and learning for secondary education in Pawtucket), Roberta King (guidance chair), Chris Lord (principal), Grace Malkasian (science chair), Melitzi Torres (12th-grade student)

CONTACT: Chris Lord | lordc@psdri.net

www.psdri.net

2 4 Transformational Leadership: Our Journey Toward Excellence

Five years ago, a new administrative team took over at Smithfield High School, which presented new challenges and new opportunities. Using accreditation standards and Rhode Island's regulations as a starting point, the team set out to strengthen faculty collaboration and use student-performance data to drive a systemic school-improvement process. In a few short years, discipline referrals dropped, student achievement went up, and faculty collaboration and morale improved dramatically. Although refinements are still being made and the model is not yet perfected, the faculty, staff, students, and parents are coming together to help lead our school's transformation. Participants will learn about Smithfield's collaborative reform process, including how the school used performance data and the Consortium's Global Best Practices tool to structure our journey toward excellence.

SCHOOL: Smithfield High School, Smithfield, Rhode Island

PRESENTERS: Daniel Kelley (principal), Renee Palazzo (assistant principal), Alan Tenreiro (assistant principal)

CONTACT: Daniel Kelley | dkelley@smithfield-ps.org

www.shsri.org

VERMONT PRESENTATIONS

2 Many Voices, One Mission: Democratizing School Transformation

Democratization has become the engine of transformation at Harwood Union High School. Inclusivity, openness, shared leadership, student voice—these are our foundational values. A team of students and faculty will showcase our collaborative decision-making model—the H-1 Change Process—and several innovations that have fostered a more democratic school culture: student-run assemblies, the H-term (a two-week block of instructional time devoted to student voice and choice), a Big Picture Learning school-within-a-school model, local food-service partnerships, the Youth and Adults Transforming Schools Together Team (which uses action research to guide transformation), and our performance-based graduation portfolio that ensures our school is fulfilling its mission. Participants will leave with the insights and strategies they need to enhance democratic learning in their school.

SCHOOL: Harwood Union High School, South Duxbury, Vermont

PRESENTERS: Helen Beattie (YATST director), Ellen Berrings (employment specialist), Jean Berthiaume (teacher), Kathy Cadwell (teacher), Anna Church (student), Addie Dettor (student), Marcus Grace (teacher), Susan Hennessey (media specialist/librarian), Paul Morris (chef), Yuka Oiwa (student), Duane Pierson (principal), Zak Williams (student)

CONTACT: Duane Pierson | piersond@harwood.org

www.harwoodunion.com

3 4 Embracing the Big Picture: Real-World Learning for Every Student

For the past two years, Big Picture South Burlington has provided a rigorous, relevant, and flexible high school education to its thirty students. In South Burlington High School's school-within-a-school, students design their own curriculum and engage in real-world learning experiences every week. After two years of research, Rochester High School, a rural small school located in central Vermont, launched Central Vermont Big Picture Academy last fall with fourteen students in one advisory in grades 9–12. In this joint presentation, students and staff from both schools will share the triumphs and struggles entailed in starting up a new school, and participants will leave with strategies for building effective small learning communities.

SCHOOLS: Rochester High School, Rochester, Vermont | South Burlington High School, South Burlington, Vermont

PRESENTERS: Sarah Bertucci (internship coordinator), Brian Greenfield (advisor), Kerith Lewis (advisor), Jim Shields (advisor), Andy West (curriculum director), students from BPSB and CVBPA

CONTACT: Andy West | awest@wnwsu.org + Sarah Bertucci | sarah@bigpicturesb.net

www.bigpicturesb.net | www.rochesterschool.org

1 2 Tearing Down Walls, Building a Brighter Future

In 2006, Vergennes Union High School received one of the few transformation grants given by the state of Vermont. Over the past five years, our school has taken a systemic approach to school improvement that includes (1) a positive Behavioral Supports System with learning-pathway options, daily intervention time, and a strong morning meeting model linked to grade-level Educational Support Teams; (2) multiple opportunities for teachers to self-identify as leaders, determine school-wide professional development, and establish and lead study groups and support teams; and (3) a school-wide effort to work toward performance-based graduation requirements that will ensure high academic expectations across courses and learning pathways. Presenters will share a brief history of our integrated system, including obstacles, confusions, and resolutions encountered along the way. Participants will also learn about our shared leadership model and how we are transforming our learning culture.

SCHOOL: Vergennes Union High School, Vergennes, Vermont

PRESENTERS: Beth Adreon (teacher), Nancy Ambrose (teacher), Matt DeBlois (teacher), Kristine Kirkaldy (teacher), Sarah Thompson (teacher), Ed Webbley (co-principal)

CONTACT: Kristine Kirkaldy | kkirkaldy@anwsu.org

www.vuhs.org

NESSC PRESENTATIONS

3 Selling the Mission: Practical Communication Strategies for Schools

School improvement can be challenging. But trying to communicate the rationale behind major organizational changes or new ways of teaching can present an even bigger challenge—particularly when sensible, proven, and even urgently needed changes are seen as risky or scary to those outside the school walls. Parents, school boards, local representatives, community members, and journalists are often the gatekeepers of successful reform, but they are rarely experts in education, teaching, or youth development. This presentation will equip school leaders with the practical insights and communication strategies they need to develop and deliver persuasive messaging. Participants will learn effective framing techniques, how to control the narrative (rather than merely respond after a crisis erupts), and which tools and technologies can help you advance your school's student-centered mission while building a stronger and more supportive relationship with your community.

New England Secondary School Consortium

PRESENTERS: Stephen Abbott (director of communications, Great Schools Partnership), Rhoades Alderson (campaign strategist, New Harbor Group, Rhode Island)

CONTACT: Stephen Abbott | sabbott@greatschoolspartnership.org

www.newenglandssc.org

1 Make Sure It Survives: Designing High-Impact, Forward-Thinking Policies

When policies work, no one notices; but when policies don't, the results can be disastrous. The most effective school or district policies are not elaborate inventories of strict regulations—they are opportunities for a school community to engage in an open discussion about professional and operational expectations, and to collaboratively design new ways to maximize efficiency, strengthen working relationships, bring greater coherence to school-wide programs, and ensure the productive allocation of limited resources in ways that will improve student achievement. Forward-thinking policies can also sustain successful practices in the event of leadership or staff turnover—a critical consideration for schools that have invested years in the development of new systems of teaching and learning. Using the Consortium's High Leverage Policy Framework, this presentation will show participants how to develop effective educational policies and leverage formal systems to create equitable, high-performing, student-centered schools.

New England Secondary School Consortium

PRESENTERS: Casey Cobb (director, Center for Education Policy Analysis), Anysia Mayer (researcher, Center for Education Policy Analysis), David Ruff (executive director, Great Schools Partnership)

CONTACT: David Ruff | druff@greatschoolspartnership.org

www.newenglandssc.org

About the Consortium

The New England Secondary School Consortium is a pioneering regional partnership committed to fostering forward-thinking innovations in the design and delivery of secondary education across the New England region. The five partner states of Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont believe that our bold vision, shared goals, and innovative strategies will empower us to close persistent achievement gaps, promote greater educational equity and opportunity for all students, and lead our educators into a new era of secondary schooling. The Consortium's goal is to ensure that every public high school student in our states receives an education that prepares them for success in the colleges, careers, and communities of the 21st century.

NEW ENGLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL CONSORTIUM

Conference Map

